

# Cazzie Russell

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**Cazzie Lee Russell** (born June 7, 1944 in Chicago, Illinois) is a former pro basketball player and coach. In 1962, Russell was named the Chicago Sun Times Boy's Player of the Year.

Russell played college basketball at the University of Michigan, where he led the Wolverines to three consecutive Big Ten Conference titles (1964-66) and to Final Four appearances in 1964 and 1965, losing in the final game 91-80 to defending national champion UCLA and John Wooden. In 1966, Russell averaged 30.8 points per game and was named the College Basketball Player of the Year. Crisler Arena, which opened in 1967, has been dubbed *The House that Cazzie Built*. Russell's number 33 jersey has been retired by the Wolverines.

Russell spent twelve seasons in the NBA (1966-1978), and is best remembered for his five seasons with the New York Knicks (1966-71). Russell was the NBA's first draft pick in 1966, and was named to the 1967 All-Rookie Team. He was later part of the famous 1970 Knicks team that won the NBA championship over the Los Angeles Lakers. Russell played in the 1972 NBA All-Star Game while with the Golden State Warriors.

In 1981, he returned to pro basketball as a coach in the Continental Basketball Association for the Lancaster (Pa.) Lightning. He guided his team to that league championship that season. During the playoffs, with his team depleted by injuries, Russell came out of retirement and played for the Lightning in the final game of the league championship series, played in Lancaster, PA.

During the 1960's while with the Knicks, Russell was part of the New York Army National Guard's Fighting 69th Regiment. As of the 2007-2008 basketball season, Russell is in his 12th season as head coach of the men's basketball team at the Savannah College of Art and Design.

## See also

- University of Michigan Athletic Hall of Honor

## External links

- 1966 Oscar Robertson Trophy (<http://www.oscarrobertsontrophy.org/content/view/14/17/>) USBWA College Player of the Year

Preceded by <b>Fred Hetzel</b>	<b>NBA first overall draft pick</b> 1966 NBA Draft	Succeeded by <b>Jimmy Walker</b>
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